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Remarks

The amendment to the specification on page 2 has been taken to correct a typographical error. A minor error in claim 11 has also been corrected.

Claims 10 through 19 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Hiroyuki US '635. Claims 10 through 19 also stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Anamoto US '758.

In responding to these rejections, the Applicant has amended method step h) of independent claim 10 to specify that the volume flow of the pump is adjusted by changing an internal pump volume. Claim 1 as amended is clearly distinguished from the prior art of record for the following reasons.

'758 discloses a lubricant supply system having a solenoid coil 53 driving an armature 49 which communicates with a pumping plunger 45. When the solenoid 53 is energized, the pumping plunger 45 is downwardly displaced to discharge lubricant. When the solenoid coil 53 is de-energized, a spring 48 forces the armature 49 in an upward direction drawing the pump plunger 45 along therewith and suctioning lubricant into the pumping chamber volume in preparation for the next pumping stroke. The overall flow volume is regulated by the frequency with which the solenoid coil 53 is energized. The actual pumping volume within the pumping chamber of the pump always remains the same for each pumping stroke.

A similar strategy is followed by the '635 patent. In this case, a valve 34 is closed by an energized solenoid 39 and is opened via a spring 35 when the solenoid 39 is de-energized to free the discharge of lubricant as driven

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by a pump 24 disposed upstream of the valve 34. The frequency with which the valve 34 is activated determines the overall lubricant supply. The actual pumping volume per stroke is not changed.

In contrast to prior art, the invention proposes regulation of the overall volume flow through a regulated change in the pumping volume within the pump itself. This limitation is not suggested by any of the prior art of record and therefore constitutes a recitation which renders independent claim 10 sufficiently distinguished from that prior art to satisfy the conditions of 35 USC 102 as well as 103. Review, acceptance and passage to issuance is therefore respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added in this amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

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September 12, 2005
Date

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